

FLYING SAUCER DIGEST

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FROM THE EDITOR by Allan J. Manak

Here is a follow-up on the much talked about Travis Walton case. The movie "Fire In The Sky" tells the story as Hollywood sees it. Is it accurate? "As good as you can get out of Hollywood these days," Walton says. Was the aliens' ship really so dilapidated? Were they so cruel when they examined him? And were those catacombs with decomposing bodies of earlier alien finds real? No. "It was a sterile environment," Walton says, according to the Arizona Republic of March 20, 1994. "They didn't actually hurt me. They had larger eyes and smoother skin than in the movie, and they wore coveralls."

Walton doesn't talk about all this much. He doesn't go to conventions to meet other people with alien abduction stories, although he's been asked. He works again at the mill where he was foreman before, although he's had to start at the bottom again.

UNITED AERIAL PHENOMENA AGENCY

"My way of coping is just to put it in a box, and put it behind me," he says. "I believe close encounters of most kinds are as unreported as date rape, because we are afraid of being alienated and typecast as hysterical crackpots." It is that reaction, Walton says, that would keep him from getting out of the pickup to see the huge glowing light up close, if he could live that night 19 years ago over again.

"It just completely changed everything. No aspect of my life could ever be the same again," he says. "To a great extent, it's because of people's reactions.

"Now I try to keep to myself. I've thought about getting up and going, but I wasn't about to be run out."

Walton isn't a new-age dreamer or a braggart. He speaks simply; he seems humbler, and nicer, than he would have been if his life had continued on its casual rural course. He has a low voice with the flat rich tenor of northern Arizona, says Lisa Heidinger, a Phoenix writer for the Arizona Republic. He married the woman he was engaged to at the time of the incident, and they have four children. But his friend Mike may have been even more scared than Walton himself. In the movie, disillusioned that townspeople suspect him of murder and then don't believe the alien abduction happened, Mike becomes a recluse in a forest shack. The real - life Mike has moved to another town, Walton says, but the pieces of his life never fit the same way.

"Our families got together at Christmas and New Year's" says Walton, who married Mike's sister. "He didn't come."

Walton says not a day goes by that he doesn't think of the experience, and he can't calculate how it changed his life.

"It's like the road took one direction, and we don't know where the other ones would go," he says.

It's a very interesting follow-up to a most fantastic story.

UFO BITS AND PIECES

by Allan J. Manak

THE 31st NATIONAL UFO CONVENTION: Tickets are selling very well, and we at UAPA are anticipating a sell-out. It looks as if there will be no tickets available at the door. August 1st is the cut-off date for advance sale, so buy your tickets now.

NEW BOOK: My new book Ice Falls And Angel Hair is also doing very well in sales. Thank you for all the interest and early sales response. I really appreciate the attention the book has thus far generated.

MOONWALK: July 20, 1994 marks the 25th anniversary of the moonwalk with the Apollo astronauts. It really doesn't seem that long ago. Astronomy Magazine of July '94 does a fantastic job describing this anniversary with a beautiful article, featuring great illustrations and photos. Pick up a copy, if you can.

NEW MYSTERY: Another mania on the scale of crop - circles is "Rings of Ice". An article with plenty of photos appears in the latest issue of Fortean Times, number 74. This article is very well written and should be looked into.

MYSTERY STAR EXPLAINED: New images of the Milky Way galaxy's most powerful star show it shines with 3 million times as much energy as the sun, erupts like a volcano and looks "like an ant in a tutu." The star, which is called Eta Carinae and has puzzled astronomers for centuries, is "an honest-to-God mystery," University of Minnesota astronomer Kris Davidson said at the national meeting of The American Astronomical Society. Records

more than 300 years old showed that for two centuries it flickered up and down in brightness, and even varied in colors. In 1837 it blew up and became exceptionally bright. "This was the brightest star in the southern sky for 20 years," Davidson said. Instead of eventually dimming and collapsing into a neutron star, as do many exploded stars, Eta Carinae lived on and continues to shine brilliantly. "It is the most powerful star that we know much about," Davidson said. New images of Eta Carinae by the repaired Hubble space telescope show the star has formed two spherical clouds joined in the middle, creating a shape that resembles a barbell. The astronomer said that a belt separating the two clouds has to be a rotating disc, like the rings of Saturn. The images show that streamers of material are flowing from the disc and far out into space. The star is located in the constellation Carina, which is visible only in the southern hemisphere. cr: Cleveland Plain Dealer June 2, 1994.

RETROSPECTIVE: Omaha Beach, France, June 1944. Shortly after June 6, with Normandy secured, the U.S.S. George E. Badger, a liberty ship, lay anchored in the channel waters off Omaha Beach. On duty was gunner Edward Breckel, of Cincinnati, Ohio, who was contemplating the brief interlude of quiet and a dreary sky. Suddenly there appeared a dark ellipsoidal object on the horizon about five miles away, blunted on each end like a sausage. The noiseless craft remained in view for about three minutes, moving in a slow, smooth, circular course at about 15 feet above the surface of the water. It had no protruding parts like an aircraft, and was moving too low and fast for a blimp. There were no other ships on the horizon into which it disappeared. cr: C.R.I.F.O. Orbit, circa 1954.

UAPA FOUNDING MEMBER DIES

Elmer Schutt, a member of the UAPA since its inception in 1966, passed away at his Parma, Ohio home on April 20th. Schutt, a retired research engineer, was 79.

Elmer's byline can be found in scores of past issues of Flying Saucer Digest, as well as many other UFO-related publications. His articles, quite a few of them technical in nature, show his keen scientific mind, but were written in such a way as to be easily understood by non-scientists. He was also a frequent lecturer at UFO conventions and meetings, as well as technical and civic organizations.

Elmer was also an early supporter of what is now known as the National UFO Conference, having attended the very first meeting of the organization in 1964. He was also a past chairman of the Cleveland Ufology Project, as well as a board member and officer of UAPA's Cleveland chapter in the 1970s and 1980s.

We extend our sincere sympathy to his family. He was a friend and colleague who will be missed greatly.

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AROUND AND ABOUT THE SAUCER WORLD

by Rick R. Hilberg

CLOSE ENCOUNTER IN MASSACHUSETTS

William Wrinn of the Marblehead Reporter reported on this local incident in the paper's February 3rd edition:

They know they saw something, but whatever they saw remains a mystery.

The Altshuler and Salisbury family of Manataug Trail just wanted to go pick up their pizza and get home to enjoy a quiet Friday night. Instead, they came headlight-to-headlight with an unidentified flying object.

David and Carol Altshuler picked up their son, Flynn Salisbury, 14, at a friend's house Jan. 21 around 7:30 p.m. As the family drove past Seaside Park, they first saw the lights.

"I saw two bright lights, like headlights on a car, except they weren't flashing like airplane lights do. They were just going really, really steady. Every once in a while it would move and stop," says Salisbury.

Noting that he is "a big believer in this stuff," Salisbury continued to watch the object hover above the tree tops, behind the third base line of the Seaside ball field, as his folks continued to drive toward Marblehead House of Pizza on Atlantic Avenue.

"I told my parents, and they just thought I was kidding and that it was just a low flying object. But it didn't look real at all."

After picking up the pizza, the family began to drive down Essex St. but stopped momentarily behind the tall marker in Monument Park. Looking back, all three got a quick look at the object, moving slowly in the air above Washington Street and Five Corners Deli.

The group made its way to the Community Store and Beacon Street for a few side orders, all the time wondering what the heck they had been looking at. "We had seen an airplane go by previously, and there was just no comparison," explains Salisbury.

As the threesome rode down West Shore toward home, they spotted it again - this time above the football field behind the middle school. Their curiosity level was too high to ignore it.

"So my mom said why don't we go to the middle school. So we turned onto Jersey Street and onto the middle school (access) road and we saw it again."

As David Altshuler pulled the car to the side of the road, just before the field ticket booth area, they had their closest encounter.

They rolled down their windows and just watched it for a few minutes. Altshuler describes it as a triangular shaped object, smaller than 50 feet in length, hovering silently. With an intense white glow, the thing just floated motionless.

Although it was dark, the sky was relatively clear, and the object was close enough to wave at, but its extremely bright lights cast a glow around the small, hovering craft, partially obscuring it.

"It was really unusual," remembers Altshuler, an English teacher at the high school. "I just couldn't think what it could be. Maybe an advertisement? But I couldn't see anything, really. It just had the shape of a large wing, with four or five very bright, round lights."

And also, just possibly, the first known Marblehead UFO contact.

"I flashed my headlights, and it moved towards us a little," explains Altshuler. Having fun with it, "I said to my wife, 'They're coming for us' and she said 'Oh! Let's get out of here.'"

"At that point," says Salisbury, "we thought, all right, lets get out of here. This is getting weird. So we drove home and it moved

slowly toward Salem Harbor and the New England Power plant."

When they got home, pizza was the last thing on Flynn Salisbury's mind. A phone call to his friend and neighbor sent Mark Zimmerman right to his window, where he says he spotted the craft hovering over Salem Harbor. He, too, has no clue as to what he could have been staring at.

"It started moving really slowly, and I was talking with Flynn, and he told me to get the video camera," says Zimmerman. "I went and got it, and then I saw it come around the back of the house and saw it again through another window, but then it moved off, and I couldn't see it anymore."

The sighting has family members wondering exactly what they saw.

Airplanes do frequently fly over Marblehead in their approach to Logan, but the family says this craft wasn't anything like an airplane or a helicopter.

"What was behind those lights? I don't know," wonders Altshuler.

With typical aircraft ruled out, Altshuler believes it might be one of those do-it-yourself flying machines available in the classifieds of Popular Mechanics. His colleagues at school have even suggested that it might be a small blimp or hover craft that sometimes flies out of Beverly Airport.

But that is unlikely, according to a spokesman at the New England Flight School at the airport.

"Nothing that we know of would have come out of here. We usually shut down at sundown," the spokesman said.

The FAA in Nashua, N.H., which tracks anything that will show up on radar, said nothing was reported that night.

"The agency noticed nothing unusual on its radar scopes between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. on Jan. 21 and we received no reports of unusual activity in that area," says Anthony Willett, FAA spokesman.

The only report the Marblehead police received was the one Salisbury called in after he got home. And no other football field neighbors contacted remember seeing anything that night.

Other area residents have since come forward with sightings of similar mysterious objects.

RADAR/VISUAL SIGHTINGS IN MICHIGAN

Staffer David Hacker of the Detroit Free Press gives this account of a case that has received much attention in papers all over the country lately, and is from the paper's March 19th edition:

Holland - Until the night of March 8, plenty of clearly Identified Flying Objects roamed the home of Holly and Daryl Graves: 12 cockatiels and three parakeets, pets that live in open cages in their own room.

But it wasn't birds that the family spotted from their home about 9:30 p.m. on March 8.

"I saw six lights out the window above the barn across the street," said Joey, the Graves' 14-year-old son. "I got up and went to the sofa and looked up at the sky. They were red and white and moving."

He yelled for his parents to come look. Startled by what she saw - the lights, less than a mile away, seemed to be rotating in a circle - Holly Graves called 911.

"I wasn't thinking UFO or anything like that," she said. "I just wanted someone to come and see what we were seeing."



That call was the beginning of a series of sightings - including several unexplained phenomena that showed up on weather screens - of something that has stirred an interest in the night sky over southwestern Michigan.

"We're getting 10 or 15 new sightings a day," Virginia Tilly, a UFO expert in Grand Rapids, said this week. "We have probably 20 people in various stages of investigating these reports."

People have said they saw the UFOs from as close as 500 feet. One observer, Tilly said, described an object between Holland and Grand Haven that was "larger than a car, round, with room for several people to sit in it."

The Michigan section of MUFON has had "easily 100 more reports" from Ludington south to the Indiana border, in the Bay City-Saginaw area, in the Thumb and even in Downriver Detroit, said Tilly, one of 200 members of the group.

And the Graves? They're famous.

They turned down an interview with "Inside Edition," but agreed to appear Wednesday on CBS' "48 Hours."

UFO buffs say the lights the family spotted fit the pattern of UFO sightings.

Today, a search team from the UFO network will follow up an earlier sweep of the Holland area. On Sunday, they'll take to the air, looking for indentations in the ground, unusual swirl patterns in fields, grasses and weeds, and burn marks where a craft might have landed.

The lights Joey Graves saw are being taken seriously for two reasons:

- Holland police officer Jeff Velthouse, who responded to the call, also saw the lights. "I took the binoculars Mr. Graves was using and looked myself, and there were two lights, a red one and a white one," said Velthouse. "That's all I can tell you. I don't know what they were. I only saw them briefly."

- A meteorologist at the National Weather Service office at the Muskegon County Airport 30 miles to the north tracked unexplained echoes on his weather radar at the same moment Velthouse told a dispatcher in Holland that he saw the lights.

"My guy looked at the radar and observed three echoes as the officer was describing the movement," Leo Grenier, who is in charge of the Muskegon office, said this week. "The movement of the objects was rather erratic. The echoes were there about 15 minutes, drifting slowly south - southwest, kind of headed toward the Chicago side of the south end of Lake Michigan."

Grenier said his technician did another scan with the weather radar, and "hit the echoes between 10,000 and 25,000 feet 50 to 55 miles away, near South Haven. They were like the echoes thunderstorms make."

But, he said, the skies were clear that night. "Whatever it was, it probably was not weather."

About 20 minutes after the first weather service sighting, Grenier said, "the echoes appeared to break up into pieces and disappeared."

He said he had never encountered a similar phenomena in 37 years as a meteorologist.

His best guess?

Military aircraft capable of vertical takeoffs and landings.

Lt. Col. Charles Gilbert, an Air Force liaison to the FAA in Kansas City, Mo., said Friday that he was unable to find military aircraft in the Holland-Muskegon area that night.

Most Holland area residents seem skeptical of what the Graves family saw.

"Guys at work want to know what I've been smoking," said Daryl Graves, 37, who works at a Zeeland factory.

"My nerves are shot, and I'm sick to my stomach all the time now," said Holly Graves, 36.

Greg Dushane, an agent with the U.S. Border Patrol office in Holland, isn't ruling anything out.

"If any aliens land here they better have their papers in order," he said, unable to suppress his grin.

MYSTERY LIGHTS SIGHTED IN WYOMING

This interesting case is from the Buffalo Bulletin of March 31st:

No one has come forward with an explanation of the unusual lights seen in the skies over Johnson County on March 2 and again on March 7, but the list of people who reported seeing the strange phenomenon continues to grow.

Several more people called the Buffalo Bulletin after last week's issue was published to say they had seen these "strange lights," but none of those calling believed they could identify what they were.

One family said the lights seemed to come from almost directly over their house and they could hear a "roaring" noise. They did not describe it sounding like a jet engine or a helicopter.

And the lights were also seen by some people in the Tensleep area the night of March 7. Phyllis Moses of Tensleep says, "We also saw those same lights (two sets of two side-by-side) hanging over the mountains for about 10 minutes."

"They didn't move much," says Mrs. Moses.

"They were about where Tensleep Canyon is located. They moved on a ways and I presume they were at the top of the mountain...and then gone."

Alvina Curutchet, who lives east of Buffalo, says she saw the lights near her home on March 7. "It looked like they were out over a construction area on the Interstate Highway," she says. "When I turned the lights on in the house to look for the binoculars, the lights suddenly moved away."

Sherri Gould of Buffalo says this same kind of sighting had been reported in Belgium during the past year. She is an associate director of the "UFO Contact Center, International."

"This is an organization which tries to help people who have had a 'contact experience,'" says Mrs. Gould.

"I've been a psychic all my life," she says. "I've helped law enforcement people search for missing persons in places like Colorado."

Mrs. Gould says she did not see the lights in the sky earlier this month, but she senses there has been a lot of activity in the Buffalo area.

Most people who had seen the strange lights simply don't have an explanation to offer. Some say they don't believe in UFO's, and suspect it might have been some kind of secret military aircraft.

Whatever it was in the sky over Buffalo and other parts of Johnson County, remains a mystery for most people. Yet, there is a large number of residents who did see something that was "very unusual" and seems to defy any "easy explanation."

WEIRDOLOGY

by Rick R. Hilberg

WEIRD CREATURE SIGHTED IN WASHINGTON STATE

This April 23rd case sounds very much like a description of "Mothman," a bizarre creature sighted by many residents near Point Pleasant, West Virginia in late 1966 and early 1967. One has to wonder whether there

might be some connection 28 years and several thousand miles away! Columnist C.R. Roberts had the following information in the May 1st edition of the Tacoma News Tribune:

The engine died and the dashboard lights fell dark. Although he hadn't applied his brakes, the pickup truck he was driving stopped suddenly, abruptly, square in the middle of the road there between the edge of the forest and a scrubby clearcut field.

His headlights cut a hole through the night. He wondered what was wrong.

Then he saw the feet, descending Bird feet. Claw feet. Then the legs, the torso, the chest. And the wings, folded, attached to the back of broad shoulders. Then the head. That face. The creature, nine feet tall. 30 feet away. Blue-tinted fur, yellowish eyes, tufted ears and sharp straight teeth.

With a dust-raising thud, it landed.

Brian Canfield, 18, was alone on his way home, located in the foothills of Mount Rainier, at 9:30 a week ago Saturday night. He doesn't drink or take drugs. He's a high school senior known as an average, normal kid.

"It was standing there staring at me, like it was resting, like it didn't know what to think," he says. "I was scared. It raised the hair on me. I didn't feel threatened, just out of place."

I'd heard Brian's story and asked for an interview. "Its eyes were yellow and shaped like a piece of pie with pupils like a half-moon. The mouth was pretty big, white teeth, no fangs. The face was like a wolf," he says.

Can he smell anything? Hear anything? I ask him to remember.

He can hear the wind. "It's looking right at me like in a deep stare, like right through me. It's standing perfectly still."

It stood for - how long? - a few minutes. Several minutes. Then its fingers twitched and its wings began to unfold. Those wings were as wide as the road. "It turned its head and looked back at me and started flapping its wings," Canfield says. Then slowly it rose and so great was the turbulence the truck began to rock and sway.

Slowly the creature flew off in the direction of Mount Rainier.

"A few minutes later the truck just started. I took off," he says.

Canfield told his story at school early last week. Some believe him, some have begun to tease him. One friend helped him with the sketch and others have come up with a name for the creature.

Batsquatch.

"I'm really not into this stuff," Canfield says. "It boggles my mind really hard core. I really can't explain it. It's definitely weird."

"It did happen, I'm willing to put my life on it," he says. "I just have this picture in front of my head, the picture of it standing there. I can't get rid of it. It's just there. I kinda wish it didn't happen."

This past week I've spoken both with neighbors and with his family. I believe his story. I believe he saw something that night a week ago. I have no idea what he saw. I've spoken with experts on legends and creatures and none knows of a being such as this.



News Tribune illustration from a sketch by Dave Kiele

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